



Great Lakes Fishery Commission

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GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION HONORS TIM SULLIVAN FOR HIS DEDICATED CAREER IN THE SEA LAMPREY CONTROL PROGRAM

Sullivan recognized for developing new methods to reduce sea lamprey populations, mentoring future agents, and serving as an unwavering ambassador for the Great Lakes

OTTAWA, ONTARIO—The Great Lakes Fishery Commission presented Mr. Tim Sullivan, formerly of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with the 2024 Vernon C. Applegate Award for Outstanding Contributions to Sea Lamprey Control. The award recognized Mr. Sullivan for a dedicated career of more than 35 years with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the Ludington Biological Station. During his tenure, Mr. Sullivan was instrumental in making and implementing countless strategic advances to sea lamprey control, all in the name of maximizing sea lamprey suppression in the Great Lakes.

The award is named after the father of sea lamprey control, Dr. Vernon Applegate, which is crucial to protecting the \$7 billion Great Lakes fishery. Commissioner Ethan Baker, Mayor of Troy, Michigan, presented Mr. Sullivan with the Applegate Award at the June 2024 Commission annual meeting in Ottawa, Ontario.

“It is hard to remember a time without a Sullivan leading the sea lamprey control effort for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As a second-generation treatment supervisor, Mr. Sullivan has had the unique experience of living a large portion of the sea lamprey control history in the Great Lakes,” said Baker. “During that time, he led over 100 lampricide treatments, with some being the most complex and challenging treatments in the program. He committed to working with state, federal, and tribal partners to execute treatments with 98% treatment effectiveness, which became standard in the treatments he supervised.” Baker continued.

In addition to the science of sea lamprey control, Mr. Sullivan understands the necessity of gaining and maintaining the support of the Great Lakes community to conduct sea lamprey control. His consistent, even-keeled, straightforward interactions with people, whose perspectives and objectives often diverge, have led to better awareness of the program and better appreciation for the Commission’s mandate to control invasive sea lampreys.

“The success of the control program and the Commission’s ability to consistently maintain a



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90% reduction of sea lamprey populations in most areas of the Great Lakes would not have been possible without Mr. Sullivan’s 35 plus years of service. Even since his in retirement in 2021, he shows up to the tough treatments, illustrating time and time again that the mission of sea lamprey control has always been more than a job to him.”

Commissioner Baker concluded: “There is almost no way to quantify the significance of Tim’s contributions, but we can easily surmise that his presence and leadership within the sea lamprey control program saved tens of millions of Great Lakes fish for the people who depend on them for food, livelihood, subsistence, and recreation.”



Great Lakes Fishery Commission Commissioner Ethan Baker (left) presents Mr. Tim Sullivan with the 2024 Vernon C. Applegate Award for Outstanding Contributions to Sea Lamprey Control. The award was presented to Mr. Sullivan on June 5, 2024, during the Great Lakes Fishery Commission’s annual meeting held in Ottawa, Ontario. Photo: Z. Allan, GLFC.

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission is an international organization established by the United States and Canada through the 1954 Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries. The commission has the responsibility to support fisheries research, control the invasive sea lamprey in the Great Lakes, and facilitate implementation of A Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries, a provincial, state, and tribal fisheries management agreement.

